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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/719,321	11/21/2003	Dennis Osamu Hirotsu	AA551C	3072
27752	7590	07/13/2006	EXAMINER	
THE PROCTER & GAMBLE COMPANY INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY DIVISION WINTON HILL BUSINESS CENTER - BOX 161 6110 CENTER HILL AVENUE CINCINNATI, OH 45224			CRAIG, PAULA L	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3761	

DATE MAILED: 07/13/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/719,321	HIROTSU, DENNIS OSAMU
	Examiner Paula L. Craig	Art Unit 3761

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 April 2006.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. The objections to Claims 3, 5, and 6 are withdrawn. As to the rejections of Claims 1-10, Applicant's arguments filed April 25, 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The rejections of Claims 1-10 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are maintained for the reasons of record. Applicant argues that the Sorkin reference does not show two types of absorbent articles having different physical properties or structures, but only articles differing in color. However, color is a physical property. Page 4 of the specification provides a list of examples of physical properties or structures. Although color does not appear on the list, it is clear that the list provided is not intended to be exhaustive. Although some differences in color may relate only to aesthetics, differences in color sometimes do make a difference in the functionality of a device. This is confirmed by the Nelson reference, which uses color coding to differentiate items and avoid confusion.
2. Applicant also argues that Miller and Nelson are not analogous art and do not teach disposable absorbent product packages, but rather teach dispensing devices. The features upon which Applicant relies are not recited in the rejected claims. The claims do not contain any limitations which differentiate packages from dispensing devices. These categories overlap to a considerable extent. Products are frequently shipped in boxes which are intended to be opened and used as dispensing devices in a retail store; are such boxes packages, or are they dispensing devices? The Nelson

reference, in particular, appears to teach precisely such a use. This is confirmed by Applicant's Claim 5, which teaches that the claimed package has an opening device through which the user can pick up absorbent articles; the claim does not contain any limitations which differentiate this use from the dispensing of articles. Applicant's invention teaches a means for dispensing absorbent articles. The claims do not require that the absorbent articles be dispensed one at a time, or that the individual absorbent articles are not themselves wrapped or packaged; in fact, Applicant's Claim 8 requires that the articles be wrapped. The claims do not require that the opening device is separate from the window, or that the window must be a continuous single opening and may not have partitions within it. Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

Conclusion

3. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Paula L. Craig whose telephone number is (571) 272-5964. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:00AM-3:00PM M-TH, 7:00 AM-5:00 PM F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tanya Zalukaeva can be reached on (571) 272-1115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

TATYANA ZALUKAEVA
SUPERVISORY PRIMARY EXAMINER

Paula L Craig
Examiner
Art Unit 3761

PLC

